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ECHEMMAKERS' CHAT

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

SUBJECT: "ALL READY TO CAN." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

--ooOoo--

The canning season is here! Over backyard fences--at home demonstration meetings--and even during friendly afternoon visits...women, who have vegetable gardens and berry patches, are exchanging ideas about canning. And such discussions are a good way to learn about last year's mistakes and to get news of the latest methods.

So today, I'm going to pass on to you some of the suggestions I've picked up lately about canning fruits and vegetables in the home kitchen.

One of my friends--we'll call her Mrs. A--doesn't have a garden, but she does have a fine berry patch. And she takes great pride in her cans of strawberries--blackberries--and raspberries.

She uses glass jars and checks them each year for cracks and chips. The covers can also be used again and again, but she never uses the rubbers a second time. She says the rubber is so important in sealing the jar properly--that she won't take any chances with poor quality rubbers.

And even when she buys new rubbers, she has a clever way to test them to make sure she's getting good quality. She doubles the rubber ring together and pinches the fold with her fingers. If the rubber doesn't crack under this test--she stretches it twice its length to see whether it will return to its original shape. Then she's sure that she's getting good rubbers that are safe to use.

Now let me tell you about some Mrs. B's canning work. There are eight in the family--so her home-canned foods are an important part of the family food supply for the winter. Mrs. B likes to have a written plan for everything she does. So, of

course, she has a canning budget. And she keeps a record from year to year--so she knows how much canned food she will need to last the family until next spring. Then she plans the garden so there will be plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables during the summer, and enough left over for canning.

Because Mrs. B cans so much--she's found that tin cans are most convenient. She explains that she saves a lot of time because she can process more at once and the tin cans take up less storage space. Of course, another advantage is that there is no loss of liquid when canning in tin. Mrs. B packs her vegetables hot and seals the tin cans before they go into the pressure canner.

She says that she did quite a bit of canning before she realized how important it was to label cans, with the name of the food and the date it was canned. Now she gets here labels all cut and ready before canning time--and she makes sure she has some paste on hand. Labels on tin cans often wrinkle and come off--but Mrs. B avoids that by making her labels long enough to go all the way around the can, and lap over. Then all she does is paste the edges of paper together.

Of course, there special kinds of cans that must be used for certain foods. And Mrs. B. has a Federal Bureau of Home Economics canning bulletin that tells when to use plain tin cans, and when to use R enamel, and when to use sanitary enamel.

Then there's Mrs. C, who had some trouble with her canned foods last year. Most of her canned vegetables spoiled, and had to be thrown away. She knows now that these non-acid foods...peas--beans--corn--and other vegetables...must be processed at a temperature higher than boiling water. That means that the only safe way to process them is in a steam pressure canner.

The C family doesn't have any money to waste on spoiled food, but Mrs. C didn't feel that they could afford to buy a pressure canner either. She was talking about her problem with some her neighbors and discovered ~~that~~ most of them were having the same trouble. So Mrs. C suggested that they get together and buy a pressure canner cooperatively.

At first they planned to take turns using the canner, but they figured that they would all probably want it at the same time. So they decided to organize a canning center. The women will bring their own fruits and vegetables and can them together. They'll share the cost of fuel and the price of the equipment. Mrs. C says she's sure they'll get more done that way, and have fun doing it.

For processing their vegetables--and later for canning meat--they'll use steam pressure canners. They're going to buy one new canner and use one old canner, that one of the women already has. And early in the season, they sent the gage from the old canner to the company for checking. So now they're absolutely sure that it's working correctly.

For processing the fruits and tomatoes, they'll use a boiling water bath. There's no need to bother with the pressure canner for these acid foods, because they'll keep safely when processed at the temperature of boiling water. To make the water bath--they're going to use a wash boiler, because it has a cover and it's big enough to hold a large number of cans and have them covered with 1 to 2 inches of water. Of course, they'll use a rack in the bottom of the wash boiler, so the water can circulate under the cans and around them.

That's all the time we have to talk about canning today. But I'll have more canning suggestions for you throughout the summer. Remember you can get a free copy of the canning bulletin, I mentioned, by writing to the United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. Just ask for the canning bulletin--or for Farmers' Bulletin No. 1762.

